

COLUMBIA. Long before the Revolutionary War, many people felt that America should have been named Columbia after the explorer Christopher Columbus. During the war, poets in the 13 colonies used the name Columbia to describe the new nation that was to become the United States. The word was first used by Phillis Wheatley, a black slave poet in Massachusetts, in a poem honoring George Washington. Philip Freneau popularized the term in several poems during and after the war. It appeared first in law in 1784 when King's College in New York City became Columbia College. Towns, counties, and institutions throughout the United States have since adopted the name.



Detail of *Proprieta Artistica*, a chromolithograph after a painting (1893) by Rodolfo Margari; Chicago Historical Society

Columbia